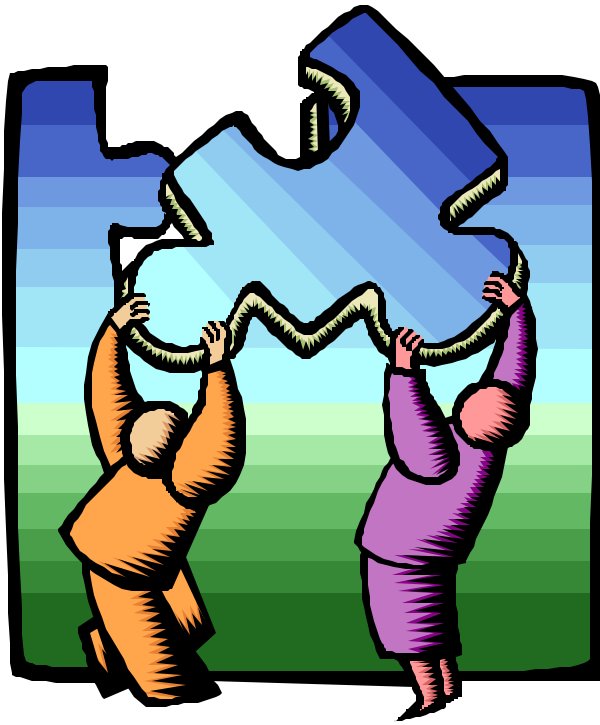


CASE ACTIVITY

1-B



Job Performance
Situation 1:
Orienting New
Staff

HEAD START
MOVING AHEAD
COMPETENCY-BASED TRAINING PROGRAM



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REFERENCE

This activity presents a type of situation that often confronts Head Start and that involves both federal and local grantee staff. It prepares participants to embark on training activities in two skill categories: *staff development and training* and *individual development*. Learners will analyze a hypothetical Head Start case and will draw on their individual experiences in meeting similar situations.

Related skill activities include 1–C, Staff Development and Training: New Staff Orientations; 1–D, Staff Development and Training: Leading a Guided Discussion; 1–E, Individual Development: Giving Feedback; 1–F, Individual Development: Developing Learning Plans; and 1–X, Application Activity: The Region.

OVERVIEW

The Region

Outcomes. Participants who complete this activity will be able to

- put themselves in the shoes of other Head Start staff
- consider the challenges presented by a commonly occurring job performance situation, as it is played out in one hypothetical program
- assess the role played by the presence or absence of skills in *new staff orientations, giving feedback, leading a guided discussion, and developing learning plans.*

Materials. Newsprint and markers

Components

This activity can be done by one person, an informal group, or a formal workshop. We have provided suggested times, but participants and facilitators may wish to adjust these to their own timetables.

Step 1. Handout: The Region	10 min.
Step 2. Worksheet: Case Questions and Discussion	20 min.
Suggested total time	30 min.

This activity contains 5 pages.



STEP 1. HANDOUT: THE REGION

Suggested time: 10 min.

Read and reflect on the following case to deepen your understanding of the situation—not to address the problems or find solutions. Following this activity, participants will work on specific skill-building activities; after that they will have the opportunity to come back to the scenario and, in an application activity, apply their increased skill competencies to addressing the issues it presents.

The Region

Hector is an ACF program and budget specialist who has worked in Head Start for many years. Recently, three ACF specialists transferred into the Head Start program from other areas within the agency. The transferees are experienced in grants management and other aspects of their new job, but lack a grounding in Head Start philosophy, history, and values. Hector has been designated as their mentor.

“I’m really glad to have this chance to be involved with Head Start,” says Doug, one of the new specialists. “The whole field of early childhood really interests me, you know.” Hector does know. Doug and his second wife have a child who is just turning three, and Doug loses no opportunity to share snapshots of Elana or relate stories about her growth and development.

“It’s great for us that you’re interested, too,” Hector replies. “Though besides the focus on child development, it’s the Head Start emphasis on a comprehensive approach that includes the family that sets the program apart.”

“Sure, I get that,” Doug answers. Hector isn’t sure that Doug gets it. “These are such crucial years for children,” Doug continues. “Their minds soak up everything! Elana is in this preschool program, and the children there are starting to work with letters and sounds. Most of our Head Start children are just as smart, I bet you. Goals 2000 wants all children ready to go to school to learn. I think we’ve got the foundation in Head Start for building a pretty nice language arts program. Wouldn’t that be a contribution—if we could grow a model in our region that has all Head Start children entering school able to read? So by the time Elana is ready for college, we might see Head Start children all across the country really ready to learn!”



STEP 2. WORKSHEET: CASE QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

Suggested time: 20 min.

Part I (10 min.) Use the following questions to reflect on the case. Question 1 applies only to grantee staff, question 2 only to federal staff, and questions 3 through 6 to both. Each participant should take about 10 minutes to answer the questions by herself or himself.

1. Grantee staff: what about this case seems familiar? What potential problems do you see coming up in the program? How will these problems affect areas of the program? How will they affect the program overall?

2. Federal staff: What about this case seems familiar? What potential problems do you see coming up in the program? What role can a federal staff person play in helping the program director identify and address these problems?

3. Both: From your experience, can you describe how the presence—or absence—of skills in *planning and implementing new staff orientations* has affected day-to-day program operations?

4. Both: From your experience, can you describe how the presence—or absence—of skills in *giving feedback* has affected programs, in both the short term and long term?

5. Both: From your experience, can you explain the presence—or absence—of skills in *leading a guided discussion* has affected day-to-day program operations?

6. Both: From your experience, can you relate how the presence—or absence—of skills in *developing learning plans* has affected program operations on a day-to-day basis?

Part II (10 min.) If you are working in pairs or a group, take another 10 minutes or so to discuss your answers, why you gave them, and any points of difference.